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Chinese and US Engagement in Africa: A Development Perspective

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Oral Presentation O6.2

CHINESE AND US ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA: A DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE

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Long considered the de facto dominion of the West, Africa has recently seen a new foreign actor from the East, in the land of the rising sun. China's rapid industrial development and recent resource scarcity have led it to Africa, touting a foreign policy of non-interference. In contrast, the United States has its eyes set on Africa for both national security concerns as well as oil reserves while promoting human rights in the region. This paper will look specifically at the official intentions of both countries, including, business venture development, current impact on development, and potential outcomes for the two very different approaches. It will address whether the approach to future development in Africa should focus on either social or economic conditions or whether a combination of both is best. The findings of this research indicate that China's strategy is a strong short-term method but ultimately will fail while the US's official strategy is a better long-term approach. A more successful strategy would be one that is inclusive and incorporates both human rights and infrastructure building as well as the creation of jobs for African citizens, which are ultimately the building blocks to development that Africa needs to establish while maintaining existing foreign relationships.